

TESTIMONY OF THE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
PUBLIC OVERSIGHT HEARING  
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM



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Before the  
Committee of the Whole  
Linda W. Cropp, Chairman

**Thursday, January 27, 2005**  
9:30 A.M. Council Chamber  
Washington, D.C.

Good morning Chairman Cropp and members of the Committee. I am Robert J. Spagnoletti, Attorney General for the District of Columbia. I am here to testify this morning about the status of the capital improvements that are underway at the Office of the Attorney General (“OAG”). As you know, OAG has received funding for two capital projects to improve our information technology applications and infrastructure. The first project involves our implementation of the ProLaw system, an automated legal case management system that tracks OAG’s caseload of more than 20,000 legal matters and assists OAG in maintaining and improving attorney productivity. The second project is designed to improve the District of Columbia Child Support Enforcement System (“DCCSES”) -- the Child Support Services Division’s (“CSSD”) automated case management system.

Implementation of OAG’s ProLaw system has been successful and is complete. To date, the requirements of the project have been satisfied, and we are assessing the need for future changes and upgrades. The Office of the Chief Technology Officer (“OCTO”) handled the funding for this project, and we have confirmed with OCTO that all of the funds allocated for this project have been spent.

With respect to the second project, OAG has received a total of \$6,304,000.00 to enhance DCCSES. These funds were scheduled to be spent in two phases over the three year period from fiscal year 2004 through fiscal year 2006. During the first phase, which was originally scheduled for fiscal year 2004 and has an allocated budget of \$687,000.00, it is anticipated that a private contractor will conduct a feasibility study to determine the best method for improving DCCSES’ functionality, including the possible acquisition of an alternate, more effective child support system. Improvements to DCCSES are needed

because this system uses outmoded technology and an unusual programming language, which make it cumbersome to upgrade and support. The feasibility contractor will conduct an assessment of DCCSES, analyze alternatives, and recommend improvements that would meet CSSD's quality and cost requirements. The contractor will also develop a Request for Proposals ("RFP") to secure a contract for the implementation of the improvements that CSSD selects. During the second phase, originally scheduled for fiscal years 2005 and 2006 with budgeted amounts of \$3,467,000.00 and \$2,150,000.00 respectively, the implementation vendor will upgrade DCCSES, and the feasibility contractor will provide quality assurance for the implementation.

Although CSSD intends to proceed with the DCCSES enhancement project as planned, initiation of the project has been delayed and the funds allocated for fiscal year 2004 have not yet been expended for two key reasons: First, it was impractical for CSSD to begin a major review and revision of its automation during fiscal 2004. OAG hired a new permanent director for CSSD in September 2003 at a time when CSSD was in the process of transitioning to a new automation vendor -- Certified Systems, Inc. ("CSI"). The information technology contract was awarded to "CSI" on October 1, 2003. Since that time CSI has progressively assumed responsibility for the development and operation of DCCSES until the termination of the contract with Tier Technologies on May 25, 2004. During this period and throughout fiscal 2004, CSI was fully occupied in stabilizing DCCSES and making urgently needed corrections to programming which Tier failed to adequately address.

In addition to contractual changes concerning development and operations, CSSD did not have a permanent IT manager in place during fiscal 2004, and it would

have been ill-advised for CSSD to begin the feasibility study without the technical and management resources needed to support the project.

Secondly, CSSD's implementation of another major program initiative during fiscal year 2004 prevented the start-up of the DCCSES enhancement project. On February 27, 2004, CSSD issued an RFP for a contract to transfer the program's collection and disbursement functions to CSSD from the D.C. Superior Court. This contract for a full service, state-of-the-art State Disbursement Unit ("SDU") was awarded on August 27, 2004, and the SDU became operational on December 9, 2004. The implementation of the SDU required automated interfacing and operational coordination between the SDU vendor, DCCSES and CSSD. It would have been impossible to conduct an effective feasibility study for the improvement of DCCSES' collection and disbursement functionality until the SDU vendor was identified and the requirements and processes of the new SDU were defined.

During fiscal 2004, CSSD made significant progress in resolving the issues that impeded the use of its capital improvement funds. The CSI transition has been completed, the SDU has been implemented, and CSSD recently hired a permanent IT manager with experience in designing and implementing automated human services systems in the District. As one of the initial tasks, the IT manager is finalizing CSSD's plans to upgrade DCCSES and has developed a workable strategy for completing the first phase of the project during fiscal year 2005. Discussions are ongoing with the Office of the Chief Technology Officer ("OCTO") to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") by which OCTO would complete the procurement for the feasibility study and assist CSSD in managing the first phase of the project. We believe that this approach

will benefit the project by expediting the procurement, providing independent system design expertise through OCTO's Business Process Reengineering Unit and promoting the standardization of the District's intra-agency technology. Under federal law, DCCSES must interface with the automated systems of other District agencies, and OCTO's expertise with respect to all of the District's systems will ensure that DCCSES upgrades help to facilitate data sharing among these systems. CSSD expects to finalize an MOU with OCTO shortly, and anticipates that a contract for the feasibility study will be awarded by the end of February 2005. We anticipate the project will be completed by the close of fiscal year 2007.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to update the Committee on OAG's progress with respect to our capital improvement projects. I am pleased to answer any questions you may have about these initiatives.